

Tuesday, June 20, 2006

## Harper's Notes II

Then and Now:

A stalemated war of aggression, entered by lies. A war of ambushes, with resistance to our occupation supported by most of the population, on whom the burden of casualties fall. A dirty war, atrocities, torture and death squads on both sides.

Political opponents paralysed by charges of not supporting the troops, cowardice, defeatist, cutting and running, treason; fear of demanding a set date for withdrawal, in face of Administration refusal to do so: which really masks the Administration determination to stay indefinitely. Beginnings of a legislative movement to set a date.

Administration secret plans to expand the war: then, to Laos, Cambodia and North Vietnam (and in the air); now, air attack on Iran, greater air in Iraq.

Secret consideration and threats of use of nuclear weapons (now, in Iran: earlier, if Iraq had had and used WMDs).

In both cases, opposition mainly Democratic (under both Dem and Repub president). (Thus, Repubs overcame their image of opposition to WWII!—ever since, hawks on Far East and Middle East! Also, even stronger than Dems on “defense” buildup and nucs.)

In both, military need and request (secretly) many more troops: blocked then by Administration refusal to mobilize; now, by lack of draft (backed, implicitly, by some Dems!)

Secret use against Americans of CIA, FBI (provocation), NSA and DOD.

Criminal actions organized by White House “plumbers” to neutralize whistle-blowers, leading to indictments against Administration officials (and a potential for impeachment?)

Many buried skeletons, outlines known: then...; now, Niger forgeries; energy task force; fore-knowledge of 9-11; coercion of intelligence community; no-bid contracts (then, helicopters? RMK?) Now: two stolen elections? Corruption/drugs/illicit arms sales: SE. Secret NSA programs. Nuc planning. Collusion of Saudis in 9-11? PNAC cabal.

1972: secret readiness to provoke a state of emergency, cancel or postpone elections (before Wallace was shot). Now, 2006, readiness to provoke or exploit another 9-11 to institute a state of emergency and a police state. Planning for martial law under FEMA/HS in both cases.

1971: a wave of CD by press, with PP; now, major leaks on NSA and CIA (though delayed), despite efforts to intimidate press with investigations. Now: a campaign to stop leaks, internally and vs. newspapers. “Battle Over the Right to Know” (headline on Time Cover Story on me and PP)

## MY AIMS

We *can* end the war—not fast, we can’t do it quickly; but *only we*, the public, can do it, and we will, eventually (by pressing Congress to cut off funding, as in Vietnam).

We *can*, in the short run, avert a new war on Iran, and the use of nucs; that we must do fast.

We must resist the ongoing Executive coup and the institution of a police state: building barriers and rolling back usurpations before the next 9-11.

A Democratic Congress, one or both Houses, is essential for these; and new Democratic leadership, not imitating Republicans.

We can and must do all this without violence: but it cannot be done without courage, civil courage of a kind uncommon in officials and Congress (and in media, professionals, especially lawyers, judges, law professors...)

It can’t be done, I think, without **glasnost**: massive revelations from inside the Executive branch, swamping the piecemeal, undocumented and anonymous leaks that have occurred so far (our main source of enlightenment so far, greater than available during Vietnam, but so far almost totally ineffective in mobilizing an opposition or affecting actual practice: torture, deception, rendition, detention, Guantanamo, electoral manipulation and fraud, incompetence, corruption, atrocities, planning for Iran and nuclears, lack of success in Iraq. “Weapons free” (free fire) zones (Haditha?). Air war. Permanent bases. Salvador Option. Plans for martial law. Drug trade financing Al Qaeda: Turkey, Afghanistan, KLA, Krygistan, Tajikistan... Repression of knowledge on global warming; nuclear glasnost needed; secrecy system..

The Administration’s secret policies are vulnerable—only—to massive, authoritative exposure by Insiders. Now, as in Vietnam, we are facing both an external and domestic crisis. There is an urgent need for timely, risk-taking truth-telling: not just telling truth to power (within the inner circles), but truth *from inside out*, insiders speaking out, with documents.

What is required, I think, the “next step,” “higher phase,” is one or more officials willing to do what I did in 1971, but with masses of related *recent* documents (as I did secretly in 1968)—the Pentagon Papers of the Next War (Iran, homeland repression; escalation in Iraq, with draft and heavier airpower from permanent bases): or evidence of massive



corruption, domestic crimes, illegal surveillance—testifying publicly at personal risk, with documents and (what I didn't do) calling on colleagues to come out with corroboration.

The personal risks of this are great, but not greater—not requiring greater courage, though of a different kind—than we demand and expect from the hundreds of thousands of young troops we have sent to Iraq. At a time when we have are causing thousands of young Americans to sacrifice their limbs or lives in a hopeless and wrongful war, there should be some older Americans in prison or risking it, or sacrificing their government careers, to end that war and avert new ones as bad. That starts with one: whose example will say, “Follow me!”

Comprehensive and authoritative disclosures have been made (unlike Vietnam) by some insiders—Clarke, O'Neill, Scheuer, Wilkerson, Pilar—but in each case, only very belatedly, years after the war had begun, without documents: without risking their clearances or future Executive employment. Each one of these had the early access and the critical perceptions and concern to have done what I'm calling for now: and to have averted the Iraq War. (Clarke famously, and rightly, apologized to the survivors of 9-11 and to the American people for having failed to prevent 9-11, which was his immediate jurisdiction; but he could more relevantly have apologized for failing to warn of and prevent the catastrophe of Iraq! Or, of the total incompetence and counterproductive focus of the Administration with respect to terrorism, about which he actually lied in Congress!) (GET HIS QUOTE TO CONGRESS)

When I compare what Clarke (and the others) have contributed (which is great, and admirable) to what he/they *could* have done, I'm holding up a standard that *no one* has ever met (including me: with the exception of Katharine Gun, whose access was very limited), in any bureaucracy known to me. My aim in raising this is not to be utopian, but to responding to this current crisis by evoking, if possible, a type of behavior that has not yet occurred before, but which the situation demands.

Yes, I'm calling for heroic behavior: forthright, candid and self-sacrificing. Heroes are always, no doubt, in short supply, in civilian life. But why should they be non-existent—if the need is made clear enough?

[The closest precedent is mine and Tony Russo's (it's remarkable that it was Morton Halperin, who had “by coincidence” actually directed the study we—not he, despite the conviction of our prosecutor--leaked, who was the one official who felt the call to join our defense). The precedent is limited only by the fact that my access to current documents (though I had good inside information) was very limited at the time I decided to act. Other precedents are those who took lesser risks in anonymous, piecemeal but important leaks, in Vietnam and now; and those officials who resigned from their careers in protest.

Without current documents, or corroborative testimony from Nixon officials (denied me from Lake or Halperin; not forthcoming in time from Morris or Watts) I

never convinced others, even journalists like Hersh or Mailer, of what I was saying and predicting (correctly) about Nixon's policy. (And even Halperin lacked corroborative documents: some of which had been "leaked" to him by Eagleburger). (Lake, though not Halperin, knew both of the warrantless wiretaps and the Duck Hook planning for escalation and possible nuclear weapons. He left the Administration and worked for Muskie (?)—like Rand Beers leaving Bush to work for Kerry—but *without revealing any of this, to anyone*, so far as I know. (How much did Beers reveal to Kerry? No sign of any of it in the campaign!) And Nixon counted on this silence, though not with total (deserved) confidence. As a result, Lake was available for high jobs under Carter and Clinton, where Morris and Halperin were not. (What happened to Watts and Lynn?)]

In Vietnam, neither leaks (including the PP) nor anti-war mobilization ended the war quickly; yet, more than was known at the time, they both fed sentiment in the public that prevented disastrous escalations, and which did contribute over time to the removal of troops that made a budget cut-off of further bombing possible. And leaks—both by me, by various Deep Throats, and by John Dean and Butterfield-- were critical to the near-impeachment and resignation of the president, which likewise was necessary to the ending of the war.